Government agencies.

With respect to the spreading of smoke and haze from the forest fire in Indonesia, based on information from the India Metrological Department, the possibility of India being affected is not foreseen.

(e) Yes, Sir. The India Meteorological Department have studied the El Nino Phenomenon for the Indian Subcontinent from the year 1901 onwards. During the last 97 years, the EL Nino phenomenon was observed in 18 years. Out of the 18 EL Nino year observed, 9 El Nino years have affected the Indian monsoons

[Translation]

Non Formal Education Scheme

*71. SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULESTE : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the date from which the non formal education scheme is being operated and the number of students who were imparted education under the scheme;

(b) the amount spent thereon since 1990 and the States covered under the scheme;

(c) whether the Government have formulated any honorarium scheme for the teachers working under this scheme; and

(d) if so, the time by which the rate of honorarium is likely to be increased and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S. R. BOMMAI): (a) The scheme of Non-Formal Education (NFE) was launched on 30th June, 1978. Approximately 821.93 lakh learners were enrolled under the scheme from 1979-80 to 1996-97.

(b) From 1990-91 to 1996-97, a sum of Rs. 701.81 crores have released for NFE scheme in 21 States/UTs.

(c) Yes Sir. As per the present scheme, a sum of Rs. 200/- is paid as honorarium to the Instructors.

(d) During the 9th Plan it is proposed to revise the existing NFE Scheme which includes enhencement of honorarium for NFE instructors subject to availability of Funds.

[English]

Territorial Army Committee

*72. LT. GEN PRAKASH MANI TRIPATHI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any proposal to reduce the force levels of the Army and to increase the involvement of Territorial Army in the Security duties, especially in counterinsurgency operations;

(b) whether the Territorial Army Committee suggested compulsory enrolment of the Government employees as well as of the Territorial Army for the Navy and the Air Force; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by the Government in the light of Territorial Army Committee's suggestions?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV): (a) At present, there is no such proposal before the Government.

(b) The Territorial Army Review Commitee has, inter-alia, recommended constitution of an Indian Territorial Force comprising Army, Navy and Air Force components. The Committee has also recommended compulsory liability of Government servants and employees of PSUs to serve in the Territorial Army for a period of 5 years.

(c) The recommendation made by the Territorial Army Review Committee cover a wide area of activities and has necessitated consultations with many agencies/ organisations. The process of consultation which is already underway has not yet been completed.

Document Missing From Bihar Research Society

*73. SHRI L. RAMANA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item appearing in the Hindustan Times dated August 25, 1997 that thousands of rare books, manuscripts, research papers and other documents of national and international importance pertaining to Buddhist religion and philosophy are missing from the Bihar Research Society;

(b) if so, the details of the missing documents;

(c) whether any request has been made to the Central Government to intervene and declare the Society as a National Heritage so that the remaining rare collections are preserved; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S.R.BOMMAI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. However, the Government does not have any first hand knowledge about the state of affairs in the Bihar Research Society, Patna which is a registered Society, but not under the control or management of the Central Government.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) No final view has been taken in this respect.

Postal Services

*74. SHRI BADAL CHOUDHURY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that postal services in the North-Eastern States have deteriorated deplorably during the last three years;

(b) If so, the reasons therefor and the steps proposed to be taken to improve them;

(c) whether there is any plan to revive the grant of special duty allowance to the postal employees posted in the North-Eastern States and pay the arrear SDA to them to the period upto the date of Supreme Court ruling in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether there is any contemplation to regularise the services of E.D. employees (Extra Departmental) whose services have been to be most essential to the Department over the years; and

(f) if so, the time by which it is likely to be materialised?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) and (b) Postal Services in the North Eastern States are by and large satisfactory. However, there are instances of delay in mails due to the reasons like cancellation of and late running of mail carrying planes, trains and buses, natural calamities, bandhs and insurgency in one State or the other in the Region. Corrective actions are taken on all such occasions to maintain the services. Mail arrangement for North-Eastern States has been reviewed recently and direct flights from Calcutta to Aizwal and Dimapur and vice versa are being utilized for speeding mail to and from these areas. To improve the quality of service in the Region, a number of modernisation of projects have also been undertaken including setting up of VSAT stations for speeding of money order service.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

(e) and (f) ED employees are part of the postal system of the country and the terms and conditions of service are reviewed from time to time.

Allotment of Defence Land to Private Parties

*75. DR. M. JAGANNATH:

SHRI S. RAMACHANDRA REDDY:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether prime Defence lands meant for the Army training have been allotted to various private parties in violation of the rules and protests made by the Chiefs of Defence forces;

(b) if so, the details of Defence lands allotted to private parties, lying unused or converted for other uses during the last three years;

(c) whether the Government propose to cancel the allotment of prime defence lands to private parties;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the Government propose to formulate a land management policy to check the misuse of defence lands;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV): (a) to (d) No prime defence land used for Army Training has been allotted to private parties in violation of rules.

(e) to (g) As per direction of the Prime Minister transfer/ alienation of all defence land has been prohibited except with the specific prior approval of the Cabinet. Further, instructions have been issued freezing all commercial use of defence land and buildings.

Foreign Degrees

*76. SHRI V.V.RAGHAVAN:

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government had been drawn to the news-item appearing in the Indian Express captioned "Students make beeline for cash-and-carry foreign degrees", dated October 14, 1997;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein;

(c) whether the Government have any mechanism to monitor or check such universities that have set up shops in India; and

(d) If so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S.R.BOMMAI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The matter is sub-judice before the Madras High Court on a Petition moved by one Shri R. Sethuraman challenging the legality of foreign universities functioning in the country. While the case is yet to be finally disposed off, the honourable Court has permitted such universities to operate in the country subject ot certain restrictions till the final disposal of the case.

Cauvery Water Dispute

*77. SHRI N.DENNIS:

SHRI A.G.S. RAM BABU:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Chief Ministers of Southern States recently held a meeting to discuss the Cauvery Water Dispute;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and